

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE NEW NOVELIST.

THE BREAD-WINNERS. A Social Study. 16mo, pp. 319. Harper & Brothers.

It needs little penetration to discover that the author of this story is an experienced man of letters, but a new novelist. The art of putting things with point and precision, of expressing a striking thought so neatly that the felicity of the terse phrase rivals the brightness of the idea, of telling a story clearly and quickly, and depicting various phases of life and shades of character, with a few and vigorous but careful strokes, is not an accomplishment which comes by nature; it is the product of trained talent.

This book would be welcome, if for no other reason, as a memoir of the past. It is strange, and is indeed the present publication of this book sufficiently denotes. Most men at four-score have ceased to take a lively interest in the affairs of the world. Mr. Lunt, at that age, is the active director of a Harbor of Refuge on the stormy south coast of Massachusetts, and he contributes to literature a complete edition of his poems.

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The author has probably accomplished all that he

can do. He calls the book "a social study,"

not a novel. Its most remarkable merit is the extraordianry vividness with which it presents three strongly contrasted varieties of American life, each with an exactitude and dramatic distinctness which seem to be the result of close personal observation; and yet the refined society of "Algonquin Avenue," the "brotherhoods" of demagogues and strikers, and the base world of Miss Maud Matchin are so far apart that it is a mystery how one man could have studied them all. The creative dramatic faculty, however, is a sort of clairvoyance, which lays bare to an author phases of experience which he has not actually experienced, and the inner character and thoughts of persons who have only brushed against him. Nothing could be more like than the description of the meeting of the Brotherhood of Bread Winners, the brutal and ignorant task of the professional labor-agitators, and the practical politicians, and the other dangerous elements of our civilization. The very force and truthfulness of these representations are enough to secure for the book an honorable tribute of disapproval from newspapers which can ably "chime" if we may borrow the phrase of one of the Brotherhood) for "the downfall of the money-power and the rehabilitation of labor." The language of this class may be borrowed from their journals and speeches; but the power of realizing it in the form of conversation is a gift akin to that of imagination. The baseness of the secret society reformers, who shark work by espousing the claims of the workingman to "a little fairer divide," is strongly illustrated in the character of Ollitt, and the effect is heightened by the introduction of the honest old carpenter, Saul Matchin, who has not much to do with the story, but is as real as any of the prominent actors. In one of Ollitt's talks with Sam Sleeny there is a fine touch which shows the author's knack of illuminating a speech or a description with an electric flash. "Do!" cried Ollitt, "we are goin' to make war on capital. We are goin' to scare the blood-suckers into tears. We are goin' to get our rights—peaceably, if we can't get them any other way." The humor of this sudden inversion is indescribable; and what a flood of light it throws upon Ollitt's ignorance and truculence!

Temple, who is one of the most brilliant ideas of the book, is revealed to us in a series of flashes. Maud Matchin, who is par excellence the personage of the story, is displayed in one phrase of the first chapter. She calls upon Arthur Farnham and introduces herself thus: "My name is Miss Maud Matchin." We hardly need any further description of the handsome, ill-bred, trivial, sordid, ambitious, ignorant high-school graduate, who despises her parents and their humble life, and longs for the higher destiny of which she has glimpse in the society papers. Maud Matchin is a new figure in American fiction. Everybody has seen her living counterpart; but here for the first time the character is subjected to a thorough dissection, and a specimen of morbid moral anatomy is exposed, which derives a certain dreadful fascination from the fact that it is by no means uncommon. The author's success in penetrating the recesses of this girl's mean and narrow mind, and catching the mixture of sham "stylishness" and essential vulgarity in her talk and manners, is the most signal instance of that power of realization which we have likened to the creative faculty. In the portraits of the higher class, Arthur Farnham and the Holdings, it is perhaps enough to praise the writer's accurate observation; though there are many delicate touches here which remind us that the author is often reflecting his own refinement. The lovely image of Alice Belding is beautifully drawn; and there is an exquisite art in the indication of a difference of character between mother and daughter, as if the girl with the advantage of an extra generation of gentleness and culture represented a finer type of soul and a more perfect polish. The management of Alice's participation in the last chapters is extremely poetical, and the conclusion is natural and effective.

We might mention many scenes which seem to us particularly strong, but if we began such a catalogue we should not know where to stop. The incidents of the strike are not told with as much fulness as the plan of the story would warrant, but they are handled with great vigor and brilliancy. The catastrophe of Ollitt's plot is an admirable piece of writing, and the disposition which is finally made of Maud and Sam Sleeny, though it may strike the reader at first with a little unpleasant surprise, is a most ingenious and original dispensation of poetic justice. The political episodes constitute a satire more or less severely true for the intensely humorous. The interview between Farnham and Pennybaker, when the latter patriot is "a kickin' like a Texas steer," because his colleagues on the library board have organized a freeze-out against him in a little matter of patronage, is simply perfect.

GEORGE LUNT'S POEMS.

POEMS. By GEORGE LUNT. 16mo, pp. 285. Boston: Cappell, Upham & Co.

One of the veterans of American literature and journalism is represented in this book by no less than one hundred and forty-two of his poems—a very large number of poetical pieces for any man, toward the end of his career, to send forth stamped with the seal of his mature and final approval. The name of George Lunt was familiar, as that of a poet and novelist, and also as that of an editor and critical reviewer, to the generation which preceded our own—to the time of Webster and Cheate and Everett, when Washington Irving and Cooper were living monarchs in our literature, and Halleck, Willis, Peveral and Tuckerman were familiar names. Mr. Lunt is now an aged man, in years, but his spirit remains young and his zeal unweary,

as every reader of these pages will perceive, and as, indeed, the present publication of this book sufficiently denotes. Most men at four-score have ceased to take a lively interest in the affairs of the world. Mr. Lunt, at that age, is the active director of a Harbor of Refuge on the stormy south coast of Massachusetts, and he contributes to literature a complete edition of his poems.

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And the day after, Kinnick went into that another town where Johnson and Garlick were doing together in a pretty little company. Johnson humorously exclaimed:

"What do you say? I With twopenny halfpenny in my pocket?" "Why, yes," retorted John, "you have come with me, and I am your master."

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